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ABSTRACT

This document contains three papers from a symposium on life-affirming work and social justice that was conducted as part of a conference on human resource development (HRD). "Doing Good or Doing Well? A Counter-story of Continuing Professional Education (CPE)" (Laurel Jeris, Linda Armacost) reports on an exploratory study in which a critical literature review and comparative analysis of CPE curricula offered by medical and legal professional associations revealed how political, cultural, and institutional practices within the professions and their associations support or injure various groups. "The Ambushed Spirit: Peace, Violence, Downsizing, and Implications for HRD" (Daniela Truty) summarizes a study in which an investigation of downsizing from the perspective of the person who was separated from the job yielded evidence suggesting that the experience of downsizing is not uniform among affected employees but is instead dependent on contextual factors and other constitutive elements of what it means to be a person in the workplace. "Family, Culture and Community Work: A View from the Margins" (Phyllis Cunningham, Regina Curry, Matthias Hawkins), which uses the techniques of participatory research and study circles to analyze life-affirming work in an empowerment zone, identifies the following types of life-affirming work: mother work; cultural work; and community work. All three papers include substantial bibliographies. (MN)

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# 2002 AHRD Conference

# Life Affirming Work and Social Justice

## Symposium 23

Honolulu, Hawaii

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# Doing Good or Doing Well? A Counter-story of Continuing Professional Education (CPE)

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*Through a critical literature review and comparison of CPE curricula offered by medical and legal professional associations, this study examines ways in which political, cultural, and institutional practices within the professions and their associations support or injure various groups. This exploratory study begins the examination of one of four research propositions composed to stimulate new questions and research in CPE, focusing on the relationship between CPE and social justice*

Keywords: Continuing Professional Education, Diversity, Social Justice

This study reexamines traditional approaches to continuing professional education (CPE), but in a different way from other recent calls for scrutiny and subsequent reframing (Mott and Daley, 2000). The professions, originally designed by and for the privileged, in many ways still function as elite groups. In stark contrast to a uniform profile of the highest status professions (medicine, law, engineering) as white males from privileged backgrounds (Eraut, 1994), today's professionals are increasingly differentiated in social background, race/ethnicity, gender, disability, lifestyle, and sexual orientation. This has resulted not only in the emerging diversity of the professions, but also in the proliferation of young professionals who challenge traditional values, assumptions, and conventions.

The CPE curricula of mainstream professional associations are composed primarily of updates on content knowledge, which are presented as "scientific," hence value neutral. The extent to which this knowledge is Euro-centered and excludes the contributions of women and non-Whites is left unexplored.

Two recent commentaries on the state of CPE (Cervero, 2000, and Queeney, 2000) do not include increasing diversity in the professions themselves as one of the current challenges, trends, or critical issues. We assert that the traditional view of CPE based on an objectivist theory of knowledge is inadequate to enhance competence for (1) successfully relating to an increasingly diverse professional community; (2) reframing policies, practices, and barriers to entry in the professions; and (3) using specialized knowledge for treating people, not as collections of needs, but as whole human beings (McKnight, 1995, p.39).

**Problem Statement and Research Propositions**

The mainstream approach to CPE disregards the critical literature that questions the concept of professionalism as an ideology. If we are to create a theory of communicative action (Habermas, 1999) for professions that is centered on communities of difference, we must turn to a body of knowledge that has hitherto been ignored. The research propositions stated below and the specific question this study addresses, are framed differently from many found in the literature on CPE. Rather than focusing on measurable educational outcomes of learners, they call attention to the structures and processes of the professions (including CPE) intended to improve the professional practice of their constituencies.

Traditionally, the ideal profession is depicted as a category or a distinction in which individuals recognize others as they recognize themselves promoting an ideal of community that is unable to accommodate plurality, difference, and different realities (Young, 1990). This approach is a conceptual straitjacket for researchers, rendering many questions "unaskable" because they cannot be accommodated within traditional methodologies. By denying plurality, differences, and different realities, membership in a profession (and development of professional expertise) appears to require the erasure of identities arising from race, class, and gender.

Much of the current literature focuses on a long list of ills that plague CPE, but makes few recommendations on how to build professional membership and competence that truly addresses the challenges of the 21st century. Collins (1991, 1998) informs us, and Eraut (1994) concurs, that CPE needs more emancipatory strategies and practices.

As Foucault (1977) noted, "Knowledge derives not from some subject of knowledge, but from the power relations that invest it. . . .All knowledge is political" (p. 220). Foucault, among other critical theorists, viewed power as being embedded in existing social structures and discourse, rather than the possession of those who then

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use it to regiment and control others hegemonically. Hence, knowledge construction, through research methodologies that have the potential for being emancipatory rather than oppressive, provides rational grounds for:

1. Requiring that differences in gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation become central to the concerns of the professions, i.e., in the day-to-day life of a professional, the impact of practices on different groups and the implications of these practices for whole communities must be considered.

2. Directing us to examine the particular ways in which political, cultural, and institutional practices within the professions support or injure various groups.

3. Questioning professional knowledge in such a way that the institutional structures associated with housing bodies of expert knowledge (hospitals, school, courts, professional associations), that are organized on the basis on the dominant cultures values and norms, are examined for their commitment to social justice.

4. Becoming border crossers; that is, "to understand Otherness in its own terms" (Giroux, 1992, p. 23). This is made possible by exploring and articulating the obstacles erected by power, authority, membership in professions, and control over resources.

In 1988, Cervero asserted that the critical viewpoint was crucial to sound practice in CPE because it holds ethical and political considerations alongside technical expertise as equally important dimensions of continuing professional education and development. Further, adult educators who design and deliver CPE courses in a variety of settings should have little difficulty in incorporating sessions for attendees in which they are asked to critically reflect upon the questions. "Am I doing good (for society)? Or, am I doing well (for myself)?" Given the prevailing view among many adult educators that knowledge is socially constructed, serious reflection on one's contribution to the growth of civil society while seated in rows of a well chilled meeting room for CPE updates seems almost ludicrous (Boud and Walker, 1998). Perhaps it is time to give up the notion that knowledge is "constructed" and replace it with the idea that the products of culture (knowledge is one of them) are the results of a negotiation with a lifeworld of which we are a part. Further, the various group identities that evolve out of these negotiations inform us that classrooms that don't include our lifeworlds and the power relations that exist within them do little to support reflective dialogue on our knowledge constructions (Collins, 1998, p. 71-72).

**Research Question**

Two aspects of Cervero's articulation of current trends and issues in CPE hold particular significance for this inquiry: (1) increased collaboration among providers such as universities and workplaces, often in partnership with professional associations; and (2) the incorporation of continuing education as part of state regulatory mechanisms of licensure/certification (2000, pp. 6-8). Both of these trends highlight the reality that CPE is now highly corporatized, institutionalized, and regulated – no longer part of many practitioner's lifeworlds (if it ever was) and carried out with the precision of technical rationality.

To begin the exploration of just one of the research propositions noted above (#2), we investigated: *In what ways and to what extent do professional associations and their CPE curricula support cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialization to an objectivist view of the professions?*

**Theoretical Framework**

A major premise underlying the research propositions and the exploratory research question stated above is that a theoretical framework for researching the ways in which CPE and its diverse providers (with the workplace and professional associations as the most prevalent suppliers) is lacking. Although critiques that have contributed much to the topics of professionalism, CPE, and program planning exist such as, Illich et al., 1977; Cervero, 1989; Cervero & Wilson 1994, 1996, 1998; Collins, 1991, and McKnight, 1995, they tend to fall into two categories. First, Illich et al. (1977), Collins (1991), and McKnight (1995) provided very useful critical treatises on the meaning of professionalism as an ideology and its effects on modern society. Second, Cervero and Wilson (1994, 1996, & 1998) focused on the negotiation of power and various interests in responsible program planning. Eraut's work (1994) bridged the gap a bit more in terms of empirical research on how professionals construct knowledge to improve practice (often through CPE) but it did not satisfy the need to look across professions as most of his research

examined the staff development of K-12 teachers. It also did not examine the broader societal implications of CPE practices in terms of cultural reproduction. The primary goal then of these four propositions and the exploratory research question is to stimulate new empirical research on the ways that business-as-usual CPE practices improve practice, not only by steadily advancing technical expertise, but also by examining the ways in which that expertise contributes to social justice. If this goal is achieved, it may provide the foundation for a more comprehensive theoretical framework.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

First, literature not routinely considered in researching professional associations and CPE was reviewed and the findings are presented here in the section titled, *Critical Literature Review*. The purpose is to present a "counter-story" to the idealized notion of the professions as it relates to health care in the United States. Counter-stories, as Haraway pointed out ". . . are not any more 'real' than those widely circulated on an everyday basis, (but) they do engender situated knowledges that offer different values, perspectives, and understanding of everyday reality" (1996, p. 255). And, as Shank noted, "The most important reason to adopt new research methods is to open up the inquiry process" (1994, p. 349).

Second, a web-based document content analysis and phone follow-up was undertaken to compare CPE curricula of associations whose membership comprises a variety of diverse interests within the professions of medicine and law. These two professions provide a purposive sample in several ways. First, they share a similar historical developmental path including the timeframes within which they founded professional associations, adopted licensure requirements, standardized curricula, and limited entry to the profession members of marginalized groups and subsequently modified those practices (Illich et al., 1977; McKnight, 1995; Foucault, 1984). Further, their professional associations are "resource rich" in comparison to many others and therefore maintain regularly updated, highly sophisticated websites where members and the public-at-large may view their benefits and conference programs. These two professions' associations are identically structured in terms of the mainstream associations (beginning with the name "American") and their "National" affiliates comprised of numerous groups organized around their ethnic, racial and/or gender group identity. Finally, as Eraut (1994) pointed out, these two professions enjoy a shared perception in the public eye as the true professions, to which all other aspire. These shared characteristics facilitated an exploratory comparison.

In terms of limitations of these findings, given that the purpose of this literature review and exploration of CPE curricula is to stimulate new dialog among CPE and HRD scholars with the hope of fresh theory generation, generalization of the results to modify current practice lies outside its scope. Accordingly, what follows was informed by the work of Brookfield (1993, 1995) in which he built on the ideas put forth by the contributors to the Frankfurt School of Critical Social Theory (Habermas, Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse,) and the "pedagogy of hope" proposed by Freire (Freire and Faundez, 1989). Consistent with these frameworks, the purpose of this review is to open up spaces in which dominant ideas and unfair practices can be contested. As Brookfield noted (1993), "Sometimes all we can do is focus on how the damage inflicted by a program, policy or practice can be kept to a minimum. At other times we have the chance to develop new structures that seem more democratic or to create spaces in which open, critical conversation can take place" (p. 79). But, first we must ask the questions and understand what we find.

**Critical Literature Review**

Politics, economics, and medicine share a long history that can be traced back to the eighteenth century in Europe. Foucault's (1984) review of the politics of health in eighteenth century France examined how two distinct strands of healthcare–the private, market enterprise of the doctor/client relationship and the political/governmental goals to control the health of the labor force–converged, transmuting Western medicine into the system today. Medical expertise was a valuable skill during this era in France and Europe. Government power coalesced, and 'the public' became a defined entity to be studied, examined, and controlled. Overseeing the health of the working class was an important function for doctors in the eighteenth century. They assumed administrative positions within the power structure, dispensing advice to the work force on personal hygiene, healthy eating, and living habits. Doctors were not merely becoming separated from the working and marginal classes. They became the "overseers" (p. 171). Today, the healthcare hierarchy is well entrenched. Those with a 'doctor' appellation occupy the top rung, followed

by nursing and the allied health professions. Those who 'diagnose' control entry into the healthcare delivery system while nursing and the allied health professions exist in a subordinate position of an authoritarian system.

*The Effects of Oppression on Healthcare Professionals*

Freire (1988), noted that one major characteristic of oppression is that the values and norms become internalized in those they dominate. The oppressed become 'hosts' of the dominant society's ideology. In most cases of oppression, the dominant group looks and acts differently from the subordinate group--male doctors versus female nurses, male dentists versus female dental hygienists, male psychiatrists versus female social workers--and the characteristics of the subordinate group become devalued. He asserted that, "Submerged in reality, the oppressed cannot perceive clearly the 'order' which serves the interests of the oppressors whose image they have internalized. Chafing under the restrictions of this order, they often manifest a type of horizontal violence, striking out at their own comrades for the pettiest of reasons" (p. 44).

Freire further posited that this process of internalization leads to personality characteristics of self-hatred and low self-esteem in the dominated group. Individuals feel hostility toward the powerful, but those experiencing the effects of this hierarchy are not able directly to express it. The oppressed complain vociferously to each other, but react submissively when confronted with power. Unleashed aggression within oppressed groups can manifest in self-destructive behaviors. These characteristics stem not only from dependency, but also from hatred of their 'own kind' and a desire to be like the oppressor. As Freire concluded, "it is the rare peasant who, if promoted to landowner does not become the tyrant of the peasant" (p. 28).

*The Business of Continuing Professional Education*

Expanding technologies, information about disease, and new treatment modalities are increasing exponentially. Practitioners who have been in the field for years can be so far behind the times as to be dangerous. Hoffman (1980) described continuing education as a component of adult education, and further defined continuing education within the healthcare delivery context as, a system of education that is a subsystem of the health system, because its clients either support or deliver health care services. Similarly, licensed professionals view CPE as an integral part of being a professional, however, not everyone voluntarily seeks further education Practitioners, therefore, turn to the state for assistance in requiring it. Since a primary responsibility of the legislature is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, legislators conclude that they are fulfilling their duty to the public by requiring continuing education. State laws are amended requiring licensees to accumulate mandatory continuing education (MCE) hours during each licensure period (Houle 1980, p. 59). MCE has been a financial boon to the professional associations. Associations lobby the state legislature to require continuing education. After amending the laws or even promulgating new rules, the legislature or similar regulatory board creates a list of 'approved providers' of CPE. Besides educational institutions, local, state, and national level professional associations are typically approved providers. The associations can benefit from MCE because non-voluntary attendance in CPE courses provides virtually guaranteed revenue.

Another issue for professional associations surrounds the educational viewpoint of their CPE courses. Cervero and Wilson (1994) distilled the various views of program planners into three common views, the classical, naturalistic, and critical viewpoints (p. 14). From the perspective of CPE, the critical viewpoint has only recently emerged and it argues for the abandonment of the idea that there is consensus regarding professional quality. As Cervero asserted, "Because there is a lack of consensus in most situations, the purpose of continuing professional education is to help professionals understand the ethical and political, as well as the technical, dimensions of their work (Cervero 1989, p. 519). Given that the leadership within professional associations often are the primary authors of policy and programs, associations will have difficulty planning courses that challenge the status quo and, therefore, the leadership. For CPE practitioners within professional associations there are major hurdles to overcome in constructing programs that will support critical thinking that leads to self-reflection, and ultimately to improvement of practice not just instrumentally, but democratically. As Cervero and Wilson (1994) pointed out "It is especially difficult to envision how program planners might practice this [critical] viewpoint in organizations that are not committed to the particular political and ethical agenda espoused in the theories, a common situation for many educators of adults. For example, how are educators who are personally committed to these goals to plan programs in the face of an organizational mandate to make a profit?" (p. 24). Although program planners would do well to consider grass roots members and nonmembers when constructing CPE courses, current association

partnerships and allegiances to regulatory and accrediting bodies, make this unlikely. Education policies need to be grounded in the goals and concerns of those 'at the bottom' of the association hierarchy because the leadership in oppressive groups may not represent the grass roots. Freire (1988) noted that this phenomenon is consistent with oppressive theory, "As the oppressor minority subordinates and dominates the majority, it must divide it and keep it divided in order to remain in power" (p. 122). Divide and rule are destined to be the outcomes of leadership selected from the elite. Another dimension of divisive leadership is the current practice of leadership training for association officers and board members. Again, Freire suggested:

> The same divisive effect occurs in connection with the so-called 'leadership training courses', which are (although carried out without any such intention by many of their organizers) in the last analysis, alienating. These courses are based on the naive assumption that one can promote the community by training its leaders –as if it were the parts that promote the whole and not the whole which, in being promoted, promotes the parts. (p. 123)

Associations plan programming based on policies adopted by the leadership; however, profitability is a primary consideration in course planning. Course planning that authentically responds to the concerns of grass roots professionals should be supported, but as Brookfield (1985) cautioned, "It is naive to presume that because adults are gathered in a class that critical adult learning is being facilitated" (p. 47). Whether CPE courses that create critical learning environments will lead to liberation for healthcare professionals is unknown. To date, liberation has not been achieved by the absence of critical learning within CPE.

**Results: CPE Curricula Comparative Analysis**

Annual conference programs provide a fascinating snapshot of the role of CPE in relation to professional association member interests. Revenue from conference registrations provides over half of the annual income for many associations making the match between member interests and needs and CPE offerings a financial imperative. Although the critical literature review focused only on healthcare, we broadened the CPE curricula comparison to medicine and law to add to the knowledge of CPE trends and practices across professions.

Table 1. *Glossary of Associations*

| | **Medical Associations (Physicians)** | **Bar Associations (Attorneys)** |
|---|---|---|
| American (mainstream) | ✓ (AMA) | ✓ (ABA) |
| National | | |
| • African American | ✓ (NMA) | ✓ (NBA) |
| • Hispanic | ✓ (NHMA) | ✓ (NHBA) |
| • Asian Pacific | | ✓ (NAPBA) |
| • First Nations | ✓ (NFNMA) | ✓ (NFMBA) |
| Minority Women's (loosely affiliated) | ✓ (NMWMA) | ✓ (NMWBA) |

A comparison of the annual conference programs over the last two years (2000-2001) for the following professional associations (see Table 1) was completed through a web-based search.

Information gleaned from all the CPE program coordinators from the affiliated National Bar Associations, and two from the affiliated National Medical Associations indicated a growing desire to standardize program formats into "Tracks" identified with a common nomenclature. This member-requested initiative is designed to help members (many of whom belong to several of the National affiliates) quickly analyze sessions of interest.

Although the annual conference CPE curricula of the AMA and ABA are also organized by tracks, (see Tables 2 and 3), the track titles indicate different emphases from those of the National Association affiliates of both professions.

Table 2. *Legal Profession Annual Meeting CPE Curricula 2000 and 2001*

| Tracks | ABA | NBA | NHBA | NAPBA | NWMBA | NFNBA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Professional Development | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Solo & Small Firm | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Corporate | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Technology | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Government & Legislation | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Association Leadership | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Cultural Competence | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Social Justice/Advocacy | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Family Law | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

Table 3. *Physicians Annual Meeting CPE Curricula 2000 and 2001*

| Tracks | AMA | NMA | NHMA | NWMMA | NFNMA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Clinical Updates | | | | | |
| • Chronic Disease/Auto Immune | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| • Mental Health | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| • Breaking News | ✓• | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Policy Issues | | | | | |
| • Federal Legislative Initiatives | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| • Organized Medicine & Future Health | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cultural Competence | | | | | |
| • Principals and Practices | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| • Systems Change | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| • Gender Perspectives | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| • Culture & Language & Health | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Research Models | | | | | |
| • Alternative Epistemologies | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Career Development | | | | | |
| • Mentoring | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| • CPE and You | ✓ | | | | |
| • Student Sessions | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Association Leadership | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |

• All new developments across medical/surgical areas are handled as "Breaking News."

The organizing principle used to create Tables 2 and 3 was ease of access. In other words, sessions were attributed to various associations' conference programs when they appeared to clearly relate to a particular track both in terms of the session description and the organization of the program. Conference programs that now feature a "Cultural Competence Track" included a description of the track as a whole and some statement indicating the previous year's interest in these topics. It is important to note that the CPE curricula of both the AMA and ABA include sessions on diversity but they tend to focus on the needs of diverse clients, not those of the professional membership. Also, these sessions are subsumed under broader concerns around clinical issues, such as the study of diabetes within a certain population or how the death penalty impacts various minority groups.

Phone interviews revealed that program planners are responding to the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Visits to the homepages of the ABA and AMA revealed position statements and anticipated additions to the 2002 conference programs related to "Disaster Response." A slightly different response emanated from several of the

National Association affiliates (medical and legal). While position statements and messages of sympathy are all but universal, phone follow-up with program coordinators of the National Bar Association affiliates confirmed that their programmatic thrusts would be on the effects of racial profiling – a repeat topic for several years now, but even more critical since September 11.

With regard to the Professional Development Tracks, the ABA and AMA session descriptions indicated a "one-size-fits-all" approach regardless of the topics (mentoring, financial planning, career planning, etc.). Alternatively, Track descriptions for the National Medical and National Bar Association affiliates feature the particular minority group interest and position the session topic within that context. Disturbingly, the ABA annual meeting program runs *concurrently* with the ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity (not shown on Table 2) and this special interest group's program includes many sessions that are very similar to the ones found on the conference agendas of the National Bar Association affiliates. *However, attendance at these sessions precludes attendance at the general membership sessions, many of which are devoted to technical updates presenting an unfortunate dilemma for conference attendees.* When asked about this conundrum, the ABA program coordinator acknowledged the decision point but noted that the previous solution (a pre-conference) did not generate enough attendance to be continued and the concurrent programs seemed to be the "perfect" solution. Further, the coordinator noted that, "there really is no problem because members who miss technical update sessions can always purchase audio and video tapes of the sessions." Scheduling decisions driven by the desire to optimize conference revenue, at the expense of other outcomes, create conditions of *de facto* segregation in this example. To the extent that conferences create spaces for dialogue among participants, the politics of scheduling play a substantial role in enabling or preventing inter-racial and cross-cultural communication. Brookfield has devoted considerable attention to the need for adult educator's (and we include CPE practitioners among them) to examine the hegemonic aspects of their practice and calls for an examination of the ways in which practice perpetuates inequities and the ways in which it is discriminatory and anti-democratic (1995). Conference programs provide an important publicly available framework for undertaking this examination.

**Conclusions, Implications for Research, and Contributions to HRD**

Returning to the research question, *In what ways, and to what extent do professional associations and their CPE curricula support cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialization to an objectivist view of the professions?* Annual meeting programs reveal a color-blind stance on the part of the AMA and ABA. Placement of the ABA Commission on Race and Ethnicity program as a concurrent offering presents disquieting evidence of the degree to which CPE practitioners are complicit in cultural reproduction. Partially in an attempt to offset asymmetrical power relations, the National (Medical or Bar) Association affiliates offer racially and ethnically sensitive CPE and explicitly promote a social justice agenda through their mission statements and their annual meeting programs. Continuing analysis of both professional association educational programs and membership demographics will help reveal the extent to which the association agendas are "preaching to their own choirs."

The purpose of presenting the initial stages of this research is to call attention to the issues raised in the four propositions posed early in this paper, particularly in relation the second proposition. There is a paucity of research that investigates CPE from a structural problem-posing rather than an instrumental problem-solving stance. Both conference programs and conversations with program coordinators (in mainstream and minority-focused associations) confirmed that sessions are selected and agendas are assembled with some attention to the association's mission, but with an overarching goal of maximizing attendance, hence revenues. And, it appears at least from session titles, that the National (Medical and Bar) Association affiliates experience social justice issues as more central to their practice than do the American (Medical and Bar) Associations.

Recently, Cervero (2000) posed the following question as the number one critical issue facing the field of CPE. He asked, "Continuing education for what? The struggle between updating professional's knowledge versus improving professional practice" (p. 8). Somehow, the professional obligation to update knowledge, improve practice, and commit to a more just society through practice have become competing rather than synergistic goals. This competition is institutionalized by the market-driven forces that retain sessions and topics based on attendance.

The problems posed by this analysis are closely aligned to those facing the AHRD Task Force on Standards and Ethics and the consideration of the role of such codes in improvement of practice. Currently, scholar/practitioners engaged in CPE affiliate with organizations within their individual professions, thus dividing the field of CPE into many diverse units. There is a need for a national and international affiliation where CPE providers and researchers can come together to share research and practice ideas. Ruona and Rusaw (2001) envisioned AHRD as a space for

creating shared vision and values, fostering changes in behavior and conduct, creating rewards and incentives for ethical conduct, and promoting and disseminating basic and applied research (p. 227). To the extent that this space can be extended to the research and practice of CPE, the potential exists for a richer consideration of HRD through the narrower lens of CPE.

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# The Ambushed Spirit: Peace, Violence, Downsizing, and Implications for HRD

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***The purpose of this study was to investigate the phenomenon of downsizing from the perspective of the person who was separated from the job, and to explore its connection to violence and peace. Findings suggest that the experience of downsizing is not uniform among affected employees; rather it is dependent on contextual factors and other constitutive elements of what it means to be a person in the work place.***

Key Words: Downsizing, Violence, Peace Studies

This paper is part of a larger study I plan to complete in Spring 2002. I was one of 1,100 white-collar employees in a large midwestern automotive manufacturing firm, separated from the job at the beginning of an industry downturn in August 2000. From my perspective, this downsizing was an act of violence as real as other types of workplace violence. I questioned whether anything existed in the literature to support my perception of downsizing as violence, if my colleagues described experiences similar to mine, and how it was that organizations were permitted to downsize in this way with virtual impunity from employees, lawmakers, and the general public. As an HRD professional in a corporate or academic environment, what did the realization that downsizing could be perceived as violence mean for my work?

## Questions and Theoretical Framework

I approached this study with the following questions: From the perspective of the person separated from the job: How does he or she describe the experience of downsizing? What is the relationship between his or her downsizing and violence? And how is it that downsizing appears to have become so accepted? To frame this study, I consulted four main bodies of literature: downsizing, violence, peace studies, and organizational studies.

### *Downsizing*

News, commentaries, and stories about involuntary job loss, mergers, acquisitions, takeovers, re-engineering, reorganizations, reductions in force, firings, and layoffs, abound in the media, popular press, and investor web sites. A review of the literature on downsizing resulted in a plethora of work viewing downsizing from different perspectives and grounded in disciplines including Human Resource Management (HRM), Human Resource Development (HRD), Labor and Industrial Relations, Business Ethics, Applied Social Psychology, Philosophy, Management Studies, Family Counseling, Career Development and Counseling, Economics and Finance, and Religious Studies. Subjects of this writing have been professionally, racially, ethnically, and otherwise diverse.

Interest has focused on coping with downsizing and reemployment, particularly as the two intersect with other variables, i.e. health and demographic, for example. Most of the writing glosses over felt experiences, concentrating on how to downsize the "right" way. Writing about victims of downsizing has been descriptive, or analyzed from a clinical, psychoanalytical standpoint. While the employees' words provide the content for these analyses, there appears to be a separation between researcher and researched, subjects and objects, observer and observed, interviewer and interviewee. The literature stops short of in-depth exploration of differences in the way downsizing is experienced. None overtly connects downsizing with the discourse of violence and peace studies.

### *Violence*

The literature on violence, except for a cursory remark by Stanage (1974), has not been explicitly conjoined with the experience of downsizing. For the most part, writers have been preoccupied with defining violence, situating it within the context of evil (Karake-Shalhoub, 1999), the Myth of Satan (Hallie, 1974 & Rubinoff, 1974), and even the Holocaust. It appears that what constitutes violence for one individual may not for another, with the exception of blatant acts like murder; rather, definitions seem to be dependent upon individual perspective (Stanage, 1974, 1981). In spite of the difficulty involved in arriving at an acceptable definition, it is important to define violence within the complexity of human experience, so that its occurrences can be reduced, if not eradicated as "forms of human bondage" (Stanage, 1974, 1981).

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Violence has been discussed in terms of workplace violence, domestic violence, street violence, as well as armed violence. Usually violence is portrayed as physical violence, although psychological and emotional violence are sometimes cited, such as in the areas of child, family and spouse abuse, and psychological warfare, i.e. PSYOP. Rarely is violence analyzed holistically, affecting mind and body simultaneously; yet, Stanage (1974) holds that it seems unlikely that one could violate one's body and not affect the mind.

In the workplace, violence is presented as a risk management, legal, and HRM concern. It is associated with harassment, stress management, drug and alcohol abuse, disgruntled employees, and spillover effect from a turbulent home life. When violence is coupled with downsizing, it generally refers to hurt and angry employees who seek revenge against those who terminated the relationship.

It is possible to find some work on institutionalized violence although it tends to be mixed with discussions about violence as armed conflict (Arendt, 1970; Downs, 1995; Rubinoff, 1974; Stanage, 1974), domestic abuse, or philosophical investigations of evil, harm, force, authority, power, and strength (Arendt, 1970; Stanage, 1974). To my knowledge, this study is among the first to situate violence within the context of downsizing as perceived by those who were separated from the job—not as a response to downsizing, but in the practice of downsizing itself.

As I situate violence within the context of downsizing, I consider the social context of this workplace operating according to its constructed civil order. Stanage (1974) cites Berger and Luckmann when they assert that: "'Man is biologically predestined to construct and to inhabit a world with others. This world becomes for him the dominant and definitive reality'" (p. 215).

Pivotal to this study are Stanage's (1974) definition of violence "...as an 'out-of-order' act or event" and the Theory of Violatives. "These violatives are phenomenological distinctions within occurrences of violence—distinctions that are articulated by our language when this language is carefully explored..." (p. 208). According to Stanage (1974), occurrences are classed as violative when perceived to dis-order the civil order within a given society. One learns about violative events by situating, or locating, them within a given social context (pp. 209-10).

The phenomenon of violence can be explored according to its instrumentality within a social context. Gradations of violence can be situated along a continuum between civility and barbarity, keeping in mind that violence can be constructive or destructive in outcome or intent. When an occurrence is perceived to dis-order the civil order of a social group toward civility, the occurrence is described as constructive; conversely, when the civil order is dis-ordered away from civility and toward barbarity, it is destructive (Stanage, 1974, p. 215).

Stanage unveiled the Theory of Violatives in 1974. In 1981 he developed it further to include ways in which violative occurrences can dis-order the civil order as defined by a person's or social group's "proprietary relevancy structures." He called these unwelcome occurrences "thrusts", and names them distrusive, intrusive, obtrusive, retrusive, and subtrusive, i.e. DIORS (pp. 92-4). Together with the Theory of Violatives, the DIORS violatives extend the vocabulary of violence within the context of human phenomena, providing a commonly understood language with which to understand and discuss more precisely the different gradations of violence.

*Peace Studies*

Important to this study was the work of Johan Galtung, founder of the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo. In order to understand peace, Galtung claims, it is imperative that one study violence, since violence is the absence of peace, and, peace the absence of violence (Galtung 1969). Violence refers to the gap between potential and actual satisfaction of four basic human needs. Phenomena that widen that gap constitute violence. Through extensive research, Galtung concluded that these four human needs consisted of survival, well-being, identity, and freedom needs (Galtung, 1990).

Originally, Galtung's typology of violence had six dimensions: personal/structural, direct/indirect, and physical/ psychological. In 1990, Galtung added a seventh, cultural violence. Cultural violence is comprised of institutions that make violence seem all right, or at minimum, not so bad. Examples of contributors to cultural violence include religion, ideology, language, formal science, law, and the media.

*Organizational Studies*

Institutional theory was particularly relevant to this exploration of downsizing. Institutional theory suggests that isomorphism is a major characteristic of organizational behavior and definition, resulting in organizations becoming increasingly similar to each other, adopting homogeneous norms of behavior and structure. Di Maggio and Powell describe three types of isomorphism: coercive, mimetic, and normative, i.e. when organizations impose specific structures or rules for behavior, when organizations mimic each other's strategies, usually in response to the nebulous or unknown, and when organizations adopt or accept structures or strategies because powerful actors

become their proponents (Di Maggio & Powell, 1983, cited in http://www.stanford.edu/~krollag/org_site/encyclop/instit/brdg/stgy.html).

**Method**

I designed a qualitative investigation to address my research questions. Twenty-eight white-collar employees participated in this study, including myself. We were separated from the same organization, within the August 2000 timeframe, and represented seven company locations in this midwestern metropolitan area. Recruitment occurred through activities sponsored by the outplacement consulting firm, contracted by the organization to assist separated employees during the transition. Outplacement staff guarded identity and numbers of people who were downsized; however, I was able to generate a "Colleagues in Transition" list, which included approximately 67 employees. All were invited to participate in this study; 28 elected to do so. Candidates were limited to this metropolitan area because of ease in arranging meetings, and to minimize potential impact of dissimilar job markets on re-employment.

Data were derived from multiple sources, including a one-on-one in-depth conversation with each participant lasting from 1.5 to 4 hours, demographic profile form, two participant journals, my own field notes, two descriptive documents prepared by two participants, electronic communication with some of the participants, the company's annual report, as well as corporate news and comments from the company's investor message board.

Conversations were face-to-face at a location of the participant's choice. Three were held by telephone. I maintained written field notes throughout the conversation process, and soon after transcribed the taped conversations verbatim. Following each transcription, the document was submitted to the participant for verification of accuracy, editing, or additions. Conversations were influenced by the phenomenological method (Stanage, 1987). Moving back and forth eductively and constitutively, we sought to arrive at an in-depth understanding of content and intent, particularly of what constituted the relevance structure of each of the participants, and how they perceived order and dis-order within their work communities. Conversations began with a broad question, i.e. "bring to mind your stay at the company, and tell me the story of your downsizing". I used four prompts, "l" language, "v" violence, "sc" social construction, and "p" person to guide the discussion toward specific questions, if the conversation hadn't addressed them already.

**Analysis**

Analysis was influenced by hermeneutics, because it allowed for an interpretative process, inclusive of my own biases, experiences, knowledge, perspective, and understanding of the literature (Thompson, 1997; Thompson & Haytko, 1997; Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1990). Hermeneutics makes no claim of objectivity, generalizability or replication of these findings. Themes emerged from multiple readings of texts and transcripts, moving iteratively from part to whole to the larger whole, to the total and back again (Cotte & Ratneshwar, 1999; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), frequently refining my interpretation of what the participant was trying to say. Other written documents were analyzed in similar fashion. I wrote ideographic summaries per participant, returning to each as needed for further clarification (Cotte & Ratneshwar, 1999). I paid particular attention to the language used by the participants in describing their experience, highlighting words, phrases, and sentence constructions suggestive of the violative nature of downsizing (Stanage, 1969), from which I would develop Stanage's Theory of Violatives (1974). The demographic profile forms were useful for checking age distribution, longevity, as well as diversity.

**Findings**

It quickly became apparent that in order for the participants to tell their stories, they needed to contextualize them within the employment relationship. A temporal downsizing horizon emerged including Before, During, and After for everyone, and an Interim for some. "Before" applied to the most recent job with the company, sometimes earlier than that, and set the stage for the perceived impact of the downsizing event as well as the sense making activities that would ensue. Job experiences ranged from "a difficult stay" (Dale) to a "job of convenience" (Steve).

"During" referred to the downsizing event itself, from official notification of dismissal to final exit from the company. Participants spoke of three components, the anticipatory period, selection criteria, and the process, i.e. mechanics. Of these, the selection criteria appeared to be most troublesome. Reactions were mitigated in part by whether the selection was expected or unexpected, well communicated or not, fair or unfair, and credible or not.

"After" comprised the period from final exit to the day of our conversation. Activities during this time included sense-making, healing, learning, retiring, and seeking.

The official or unofficial "Interim" was common to few employees. Official interims began with an explicit notice of impending termination, not necessarily occurring on the designated downsizing day, and usually extending from "D-day" (Steve) through January 2001. Unofficial interims began prior to the official downsizing date, and consisted of indirect statements or managerial behaviors that unquestioningly meant downsizing to the participant. Of the 28 participants, the interim was relevant to five. The interim experience was characterized either by struggle to stay on or anticipation of something better to come.

Three different reactions to the downsizing emerged: "Layoff was a godsend to me" (Dale), "It happened: move on" (Peter), and "We were hurt" (Patrick). People with the first two reactions would have preferred to stay until they decided to leave "if they had their druthers" (Bob). Those for whom the layoff was a godsend described their most recent job as difficult, so much so that they suffered psychosomatic symptoms that would be resolved only upon severing the relationship. They saw no choice but to leave the company, had they not been downsized.

Those with the second reaction appeared to be less severely impacted, either because the job was not challenging enough in quality and/or quantity; they believed that they were undervalued by the company; or because the downsizing was accepted as a neutral event in their work lives. They saw downsizing as change, a needed transition to a different professional phase, or an opportunity to retire early, especially since economically they had no difficulties. People in this group tended to linger on the job because it was comfortable for them, so why not.

Of the 28 participants in this study, approximately 20 perceived their experiences as hurtful. People in this group could be evenly divided into two groups. One group wanted to stay with the company even though they were aware of interpersonal or professional problems with their immediate boss or boss' boss, the organizational structure, or other job related issues. The employee's desire to stay with the company superseded the challenges he or she was experiencing, hoping, sometimes struggling, to resolve the difficulty. The second group wanted to stay with the company, and was unaware of bothersome issues. Of these, some described recent organizational/structural changes, such as a new director of their functional unit, who brought new philosophical and operational preferences to bear on the job. Even though they were aware of the differences between the past and the present, these participants did not equate them with the necessity for their downsizing. Others did not expect to be selected at all, their downsizing had come "out of the blue" (Trinity), were happy with the job they were doing, and saw no reason for their demise. This group was searching for meaning.

The selection process resulted in ruminative activity among most participants. Perceived reasons for selection included: boss or boss' boss did not like me; my performance did not meet with their expectations; my project was discontinued due to budget cuts and restructuring; my department had to cut numbers, my job was divided among others, and my position was eliminated; the company did not have any or enough work for me to do; they made a mistake: the decision makers did not know me; new organizational reporting structure with new philosophies; I spoke up when something seemed wrong to me, and/or I did not comply with their wishes to transfer to another department; and my position was never slotted as an FTE (Full Time Equivalent).

Participants referred to their experience using different terminology, including downsized, laid off, axed, severed, cut, and separated. Regardless of which word was selected, I believe that a common connotation of each was that a union had been divided or dissolved, that something had changed, that order had been dis-ordered, that dis-order had been re-ordered, and a connection had been dis-connected, i.e. separated. These expressions demonstrated transitive grammatical structures, suggesting that subjects, known or unknown, had acted upon objects. In this case, the "objects" were once employees. Issues of power, control, freedom, and agency are located in this concept. The stories of these 28 participants suggest that they were unwelcomely separated from relationships, belonging, identity, this job, daily structure, career trajectory, and security. For Dale and Alexandra, however, the downsizing was preferable to the toxicity of the jobs. For all, perceptions of the downsizing experience appeared to be dependent upon personal perspectives and individual life contexts.

"Perspective" is derived from the Latin that means looking through, in this case, looking through the lenses of that which is important to individual persons. Examples of perspectival and contextual factors that influenced unique experiences of downsizing included personal values, upbringing, age at time of downsizing, family and/or personal health concerns, perceived and/or reported job performance, longevity with the company, continuation of benefits, perceived fairness of the decision and selection criteria, quality of stay, job search skills, issues of race, class and gender, developmental life stage, transferability of job skills, and personal sense of self.

*Language*

Stanage (1969, 1987) refers to linguistic phenomenology as a heightened awareness of the language used by persons to reveal themselves to others. Without claiming to be a trained linguist or discourse analyst, I noted the language used by the participants to tell their stories. The language tended to be vivid, filled with transitive

constructions, invoking words commonly understood in U.S. culture as connotative of violence, and figurative expressions consisting of similes and metaphors. Participants used words such as hurt, shun, cut, devastate, sever, whack, pluck, crush, axe, fire, and tear; transitive constructions including, I was laid off, I was separated, I got whacked, I was fired, and we were hurt; similes such as, I felt like a criminal, I felt like an idiot, like you were being ripped apart inside, I was like a walking dead man, ghost-like, like the death of a parent, like an outcast from society, I was like a bug in a jar, it felt like a gut shot; and metaphors like, when the hammer fell, the chain around my neck, Ole Nellie was a good ole horse, we were huddled together in the foxhole, you flunked and we didn't, I was a stigma to them, the bullet hit me, and my magic shield did not protect me this time. Linguistic constructions like these betrayed the suddenness, abruptness, unexpectedness, unwelcomeness, and the physical and psychological pain of this experience.

Those for whom downsizing had been a godsend expressed themselves in words, phrases (and gestures) of elation, like Thank God, it's over, the downsizing was a godsend to me, or a victorious Yes! With arm raised high. These revealed a sense of relief from a trying experience, a re-ordering of dis-order.

At times, the language suggested a disparity of power, coercion, finality, reification, and deception, i.e. there is nothing you can do, it's a done deal, the decision was made, no matter what I did or said it wouldn't change their decision, who knows what the real truth is, it's a game, if you destroy anything on the way out you will not get your benefits, got rid of, I was expendable, and you'll never know. Some participants spoke of assaults on their identities, using words such as humiliated, embarrassed, and insulted. Others mentioned words of alienation, such as excluded, I was left out of, I felt alone, and I am no longer a part of. Some used this language deliberately, carefully selecting the words and expressions to convey their desired messages. Others appeared to be less conscious of having chosen these words and why. Some used words that they had heard others speak in similar situations. Others transferred words from a large city's neighborhood in which they had grown up. Some drew from their interest in competitive sports, i.e. references to game and competition. Others selected words from history, particularly military history; or from movies, like "Braveheart". All appeared to reach for words outside of the whitewashed vocabulary of downsizing, re-engineering, restructuring, delayering, rightsizing, reorganizing, and other examples of corporate speak. No one used the word peace; no one used the word violence (as I had expected), even though the language used and the experiences described suggested gradations of violence.

Long-term employees reported that they had witnessed approximately seven downsizings since 1975. Most participants believed that the decision makers knew that the downsizing would negatively impact their lives, and that they did not care. How was it then that the organization downsized anyway?

Few problematized the decision to downsize, some even defended it—even after describing personal experiences ranging from unpleasant to painful. This reaction was contrary to my expectations, since I was certain they would view downsizing more critically as a result of their experiences. Perceived reasons for this downsizing included, for example: pre-emptive move for survival; it was easy and quick; in response to the stock market; to cut costs; to ensure or enhance executive bonus; because of uncontrolled growth in the boom time; re-build damaged credibility from the 80s; mismanagement; everyone else is doing it; reduced costs easily visible to the financial community; low sales mean low funds available for people; lack of proper planning; lack of fiscal responsibility in the good times; not smart enough to think of another way; employees viewed as filling positions instead of as persons; consultants persuaded people in power that this was the right decision; if people in power decided to downsize, managers beneath them would not risk a good job by challenging; company needed to look good for possible take-over; to thwart the competition; old leadership bearing old baggage; and they've done it like this before, it worked, so why not do it again.

Among perceived reasons for general acceptance of downsizing were: that's the way it is; it's like a death, it happens to everyone, it is inevitable; this is an At Will State; it's purely business; no more lifelong jobs; people move from job to job to make more money faster, grow their careers, and make up for benefits no longer provided by companies; frequency of media reporting that makes it routine; companies must show a profit; and either some lose the job or all do.

Some individuals volunteered alternatives to downsizing on their own, while others considered them only on probing. Most had not thought about ways to downsize costs without separating people from the job. Suggested alternatives included: talk to individuals first to see who plans to leave anyway; hiring freeze; no raises for a while; make processes more efficient; cross-functional training for breadth, not just depth, so that employees can move to different jobs within the company; look for where the real costs are for reduction, usually in overhead and not in people; balance the workloads, preventing hoarding, so that more people will have jobs; look for ways other than downsizing; shelf new product development until the economy is better; and sometimes just gotta bite the bullet.

**So, What Does All of This Have To Do with Violence?**

Stanage (1974) defines violence as the dis-order of order. An individual or a group of individuals according to what he, she, or they consider to be important constructs the order to which he refers. Stanage envisages a continuum spanning between order and dis-order, or civility and barbarity. He holds that it is possible to identify gradations of violence by positioning commonly understood verbs in the English language along this continuum, according to their connotation. In developing the Theory of Violatives, Stanage selected a list of verbs from the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), and added the –ive ending transforming them into nouns, suggesting that certain phenomena have the qualities of or tendencies toward whatever the verb meant. Examples of violatives that he selected include: Abusives, Breakives, Woundives, Thwartives, Ceasives, Damagives, Stopives, Spoilives, Embarrassives, Interruptives, Perturbives, Harmives, Humiliatives, Forcives, Fearives, Perturbives, Maltreatives, and Defeatives (1974, p. 230). This is an incomplete list, and Stanage challenged his readers to develop the theory by situating other violative phenomena within it. I have elected to situate downsizing within the Theory of Violatives, expanding the vocabulary with words used by participants in this study.

Violence can be constructive or destructive. Constructive phenomena move the civil order closer to civility, or order; conversely, destructive phenomena toward barbarity or dis-order. Stanage (1981) posits that violative phenomena can be said to have directionality, depending on their outcomes. For example, if a phenomenon results in the absence of something that was expected to be present, it is a distrusive, e.g. downsizing takes away a job that one expected to have until retirement. If the phenomenon is an unwelcome intruder into someone's or some group's constructed order, it is an intrusive, e.g. one's expectations for the job may include getting it done no matter what, which may intrude upon one's personal activities. When a phenomenon is thrust upon a civil order such that advances, pace, and so on are occurring so rapidly that it is difficult or impossible to keep up with them, it is said to be an obtrusive, e.g. the downsizing decision was made and implemented so rapidly that employees did not have an opportunity to learn a new skill and thus were downsized. A phenomenon that is thrust upon the social order with the outcome of negating the past or present and starting anew, often engaging in similar activities, it may be said to be a retrusive, e.g. a mid-life woman who started a career "late", after raising her children, then was downsized, may find that she has to begin a career all over again, the vertical climb having been truncated. When phenomena are thrust into a social order so that they cause one to think or behave differently than how one perceives oneself, they are known as subtrusives, e.g. a middle manager struggles with terminating employment of one of his or her team members, but does so anyway, because it was mandated by a higher level boss and to challenge it would be risky. Stanage calls these the DIORS violatives, an acronym for the various directionalities.

Careful attention to the language and expressions used by the participants in this study and a deep understanding of each person's relevancy structure extend the vocabulary of violence as well as the Theory of Violatives (Stanage, 1969). As a result of this study, for example, it is possible to position the participants' experiences of downsizing along Stanage's continuum, using words and concepts they have selected. We can now say that for some people downsizing is a shun-ive, cut-ive, rip-ive, flunk-ive, whack-ive, devastate-ive, crush-ive, concern-ive, worry-ive, devalue-ive, disrespect-ive, and so on. Accordingly, it is possible to say that if one's experience of downsizing makes it a betray-ive or disappoint-ive, it could also be a distrusive; if a strain-ive, obtrusive; and if a cut-ive, intrusive.

Galtung (1969) uses different terminology, and defines violence as an unwelcome gap between potential and actual satisfaction of four basic human needs: survival, well-being, identity, and freedom. If one accepts that the realization of human needs constitutes order and civility, then peace and social justice could be used to name the same end of the continuum as Stanage's civility and order--likewise for the absence of these and the opposite end of the continuum, i.e. violence, social injustice, dis-order, and barbarity. If the violative phenomenon suggests a subject-verb-object construction, where the subject is readily identifiable, it constitutes personal or direct violence. If the subject is vague, the phenomenon constitutes structural violence. Sometimes participants referred to their boss or boss' boss as the person who selected them for downsizing, resulting from a personal or professional vendetta. Survivors called this a "political assassination". Other times, participants alluded to "they" or "the organization" when attributing accountability for their downsizing, perhaps referring to indirect or structural violence rather than personal or direct.

Participants recounted the history of a company that had been in existence for over a century and that managed to survive near bankruptcy in the 1980s. Engaged in a cyclical industry, organizational leaders responded to each downturn by downsizing in this way. Employees came to know that if more than three years elapsed without a downsizing, something was amiss. In spite of the human hardships wrought by the downsizings, they seemed to become, in this company, an ever-looming possibility whenever a downturn was imminent. Characteristic in part of isomorphism, i.e. mimicking, organizational leaders seemed to join major competitors in the industry in shedding

employees. An internal bureaucratic and political culture of "compliance and regimentation" (Patrick) coupled with external competitive pressures made it possible for this downsizing to occur.

I suggest that a possible interpretation of the acceptability phenomenon is the cultural violence of which Galtung speaks, that makes the downsizing seem all right, or certainly not so bad (1990). Cultural institutions, such as Law (articles of incorporation, Employment at will), Ideology (capitalism, the supremacy of the shareholder), Religion (rooted in dualities, the relationship between wealth and chosenness), Formal Science (financial reports and benchmarking), Language (The corporation as active subject, headcount, they had to do it, business/personal), and the Media (commonplace through routine reporting) make personal and structural violence possible. These participants' stories of their downsizing experiences are consistent with Galtung's typology of violence, complete with its dimensions, and violations against potential realization of the four basic human needs.

**Conclusions**

Findings from this study point to the following conclusions: People experienced their downsizing differently based on individual perspective and context; When the downsizing was perceived as deliverance, it functioned to re-order order, i.e. a transition toward healing and restoration of health and well-being, because the job itself had been oppressive; When the downsizing was perceived as a "neutral" event, the participants were financially secure, viewed the job as a stepping stone in their careers and were planning to move on anyway, or perhaps felt powerless and had been conditioned culturally, philosophically, or experientially to accept their fate within the capitalist system; When the downsizing was experienced most severely, participants did not expect to be selected, did not think they deserved it, perceived breach of reciprocal implicit contract, perceived that this was an opportune thing the company did, that the downsizing was not justified economically, that their ideas were negated, that they had been shunned by the organizational culture and workplace community, that they were immediately "othered", and experienced a deep sense of loss; Most employees affected by the downsizing believed there was nothing they could do to alter the decision; Experiences of downsizing describe a gap between potential and actual realization of one or more basic human needs; Stories of the downsizing suggest corroboration of personal, structural and cultural violence to render it acceptable; and Language used to describe gradations of violence can be positioned along a continuum between violence and peace, dis-order and order, social injustice and social justice, barbarity and civility, according to the way in which the downsizing was perceived.

**Implications, New Knowledge for the Field of HRD and Directions for Future Research**

Implications of this study for the field of HRD might include: HRD professionals who prepare management scholars within academe could develop a curriculum that includes a critique of corporate practices and contemporary issues in order to understand their impact on other people; HRD professionals might consider developing and implementing a curriculum for innovation, so that new business ventures can be developed as others become obsolete; and HRD professionals could assist organizational leaders and employees to identify, design, and implement a curriculum for employability, so that employees are encouraged to keep skills up to date and be more mobile within the organization.

Findings from this study challenge the HRD practitioner to exit the silo of implementer of strategy, and to expand our sphere of influence as change agents to the larger society. If downsizing has the potential of violence for some employees, should we not be involved with policy studies, revision, creation, advocacy, and enactment?

This study invites us to regularly reflect on what it means to be an HRD professional. As we carry through each of our assignments within a fast-paced and demanding environment, we might pause to ask ourselves the following questions: Where exactly are we rushing? To what end? For whose benefit? Who is included? Who is excluded? And most importantly, is this what we ought to be doing? How can we influence decision makers within the organization, as well as society and our government, to protect those whom we call "human resources", co-workers, partners, clients, and friends? Given what this study has revealed, what are peaceful ways to interact with all stakeholders of the workplace, including employees? Are we committed to working for peace within the workplace, or are we selective about which peace, where, how, for whom, and to what degree?

If we have become HRD professionals because we perceive ourselves to be "people-persons", drawn to a helping profession, we must be vigilant about being utilized to further business ends at the expense of people ends. As people persons, we have the power to reach and communicate on an interpersonal level, a very effective characteristic for furthering workplace values, persuading, and fostering a sense of family, for example. We must ask ourselves, and ask workplace leaders, to what end? What will happen in a downturn? What will happen to these



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values? When HRD professionals not only reflect upon but also guide the discussion to those kinds of questions, we become proactive in changing the course of strategy.

While this study raises the HRD practitioner's consciousness of the violative potential of downsizing, the following research agenda might be influential in abolishing it altogether:

- What is the impact of repeated downsizing on learning and knowledge management in the workplace?
- What is the importance of commitment and relationships within the workplace as demonstrated in bottom line results?
- What must be done in order to enact policy, insuring portability of benefits? and
- What are successful alternatives to downsizing without forced separations?

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## Family, Culture and Community Work: A View From the Margins

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***We critique the limited concept of work that is confined to the production of commodities. We accept the analyses that technical rationality has colonized our life world. Utilizing participatory research and study circles with our community co-learners, we analyzed life-affirming work in the Calumet Communities Empowerment Zone. Three types of life-affirming work were found: mother work, cultural work, and community work. AHRD personnel, it is concluded, need to critique corporations who are socially irresponsible and enlarge their definition of work.***

Key Words: Life-affirming Work, African-American, Participatory Research

In 1999 we attended the Academy of Human Resource Development's (AHRD) annual meeting. We were impressed with the energy and commitment of industrial training personnel and university professors who run graduate programs that prepare and provide research to "learning organizations" and their human resource developers. We experienced highly articulated discourses on the technology, the meaning, and the spirituality of work engendered by this group. We also experienced an alienation from many of the assumptions, activities and goals that drove their knowledge production and applications.

In this era of the micro chip it would seem that all citizens could have more disposable time while doing less work. Contrary to this we note the following: 1) the economic differences between the rich and the poor are increasing, 2) the state and civil society are threatened by the market 3) mobile capital seeks out and exploits global sites with the least social and economic protection, and 4) materialism has displaced and contorted our value system. In addition, most work places are increasingly characterized by worker alienating practices such as contingency work, outsourcing, "just-in-timism", and perpetual downsizing (Brecher and Costello, 1994; Cunningham, 2000; DeOliveira and Tanden, 1994; Hart, 2002; Korten, 1995).

We have been doing participatory research (Hall, 1997) over the last five years on the far south side of Chicago in the Calumet Communities where work, as defined by AHRD, has left the neighborhoods, and taken with it, most of the "workers" within those industries. The former steel capital of the world, initiated in 1875, is located in Calumet. In 1974, this was a thriving community of 90,000. It now has a population of 43,000 residents, reflecting the national decline from 570,000 steelworkers' jobs in 1953, to 200,000 jobs in 1982. Currently, about 25% of steel produced in the U.S. comes from here (Center for Neighborhood Technology, 1998).

The Pullman Community, also part of this area, housed a company town built by George S. Pullman who not only manufactured luxury sleeping cars, but also held the monopoly of their national distribution through leasing them to railroad companies. He also employed and leased the services of porters and maids for these cars. The Pullman community was self contained on 250 acres with over 5,000 workers living in row houses with a church, hotel and park owned by Pullman situated around the factories and wheel works. In 1894, the "Pullman Strike," a bloody and violent strike between labor and the company occurred that resulted in the state using anti-trust legislation and federal troops for the first time against a union on strike. It was also the place where the first Black labor union, The Sleeping Car Porters, was started by A..Phillip Randolph. The Pullman Community gradually became a decaying neighborhood with an outmigration of whites replaced by African-Americans (Hughes,1998).

The far south side of Chicago housed much of the industrial production which supported Chicago. Today, the "brown fields" in South Chicago look surreal where the lead from Dutch Boy paint, and the slag from the steel mills, create super-fund clean up projects. It is in this community that we begin our analysis of work through the eyes of the residents. A team of over 20 graduate students and university faculty teamed with six community organizations to mobilize and develop leadership from the bottom up. The goal was to provide leadership in six areas as called for in the Empowerment Zone mission: economic revitalization, youth futures, environmental cleanup, cultural activity, health and human services, and affordable housing (Lopez, 1998). The strategy was to utilize participatory research, popular culture

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and study circles to effect this goal. Taped interviews with community leaders were made of each of the six community based organizations with whom we worked. Community residents identified problems, generated action and reflected on that action. We found that Calumet Communities' residents , regardless of formal employment status, work hard.

In this paper, we examine traditional definitions of the concept of "work, in order to reveal their definitional narrowness. In addition, the authors, and our co-learners in the Calumet Community, offer alternative definitions of work that are more comprehensive, inclusive and accurate.

**Its All In The Definition**

According to the Encarta Encyclopedia(1998), work is defined in the form of a verb, a noun, a transitive verb, an adjective, a phrasal verb, and as an idiom. The two major modes of usage, as a verb and as a noun, have twenty-seven and fifteen meanings respectively. Further, the verb category for the usage of the word "work" is divided into transitive (12) meanings and intransitive (15) meanings. Then there is the set of phrasal meanings (19) and the idiomatic meanings (7). In total, there are 68 ways to define work listed in this one reference . Clearly work is a key code word within our culture based on it's linguistic elaboration.

What is clear to us is that work driven by the bottom line of private profit is based on concepts such as commodity production, objectification, rationality that are embedded in productive processes. These concepts and processes have, in Habermasian terms,"colonized our life world" (Welton, 1997). Enveloped in a life view that our God has commissioned us to dominate the environment, we have indeed been stood on our head by our own ideology. For it is science that dominates and controls us while we triumphantly assume we are dominating the rest of creation.

What is the big deal in all this, you ask? For an answer we look at how this monopoly on defining work by business, industry and science may crush out the vitality of society, the informal terms of solidarity and exchange between members living within a common geography, a common government, and a set of common goals. For what is left out of these definitions of work is the work of women (mother work, other mother work, community mother work), cultural work and community work. The erosion of the informal culture by a narrow definition of work creates a default environment where rational definitions of work are imposed upon the vulnerable, often unemployed, marginalized members of our society. In other words, if one does not have a degree and/or a job, it is impossible to meet the conditions of a meaningful definition of work according to the society in which one lives and identifies. This ingrained attitude of contempt contributes to the erosion of the marginalized group's political identity. In this conceptual scheme the concept of unemployment quickly turns into unworthy (Bell, 1992).

"Work" with the greatest impact on and the most relevance to the goals of this democratic society should be that work with the greatest potential worth to its members. The importance of self-definition of words like work and worth is apparent when we realize that language is the frontline of the war against alienation, marginalization, and polarization—the enemies of effective, participatory democracy. This being said, we want to bring you definitions of work from the urban community perspective after we first examine some definitions of work that contrast with the views of the modern "human resource developers".

**Alternative Views Of Work**

E.P. Thompson (1967), the great English adult educator who spent his life thinking about work, the making of the working class, and the appropriate education for workers, noted that industrial capitalism *separated work and life*. This is the seminal concept that is basic to several authors thinking.

Hart (1994) picked up this theme recognizing that today it is only those who produce commodities for money that are officially counted as workers, she champions subsistence workers (those who produce life substances such as food) and mothers (who produce the workers) as doing creative and essential work. Though they are the workers who create and sustain life these are the very persons who are often excluded by the official definition of work. Rather their work is devalued and they are often dismissed as naive peasants or merely homemakers. Hart argues that both work and education should be for life. Further, Hart (2002) in an extensive study of African-American women in an urban setting found that mother work was vital to maintaining one=s family in the changing rules of welfare and work. As for the production of commodities, she notes that this activity is not production but simply transformation of materials, thus it should not be privileged over life producing activities. If anything, we should be privileging life affirming work.



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Haymes (1996) picks up this analysis focusing on race; he notes that the issue within black urban communities is survival. The learning needed is how to survive scientific rationality, since the rationality of capitalism marginalizes and defines the community invidiously as "the other". Haymes, in a careful analysis of African-Americans and their "work" contribution to the physical and cultural growth of urban areas, recognizes that Eurocentric gentrification and economic redevelopment seeks to negate this work and further marginalize Blacks by displacement. For Haymes, the hope of the African-American is the "pedagogy of place". Haymes recognizes the importance of contextualizing work by invoking the meaning found in "place". But Haymes' inferred definition of work is not about leaving the community to find economic stability. He does not emphasize science, rationality, production quotas, and the "meaning" of work or spirituality within the factory as do those in HRD. In fact, he mounts a daunting critique of how African-American's culture as well as their very blackness has been pirated and commodified by capitalistic entrepreneurs. Accordingly, Haymes defines the work of urban blacks as taking back their culture, taking back the urban spaces that they have constructed and in which they have found meaning, to relearn their strengths and to revalidate their accomplishments. He notes that they have kept their communities viable under egregious conditions and must now resist the entrepreneurial cultural voyeurism which has the potential to destroy the very meaning they have constructed.

Interestingly enough, Jose Lopez, a Puerto Rican "independentista" on the near north side of Chicago, proclaims that same ideal (Community Hearings, 1998). Lopez, sees the "work" of the urban Puerto Rican community is to take back their "place" not only in Chicago but as a nation . His concept of cultural work is political. At both ends of Division Street in their Humboldt Park community fly two fifty ton Puerto Rican flags made of pipe. The pipe symbolizes the work place in which many Puerto Rican workers historically found employment in the steel mills as pipe makers. On each side of the street the lamp posts are etched with symbols of Puerto Rican history and culture. Between these symbolic gates on Division Street stand numerous Puerto Rican cultural entities: Puerto Rican restaurants, the Boriken Bakery and Café, La Casita de don Pedro Albiso Museum of Puerto Rican History and Culture (including a park with a statue of this leader for Puerto Rican independence and the casita, a small one-room wooden residence and garden typical of Puerto Rico), the Vida-SIDA health education center, the Isabel Rosado Galleria (art), La Municipal Market (fronted by a façade of the El Morro Castle located in Puerto Rico), the Margarita de Cayey Theater of the Oppressed and permanent tables to play checkers with chairs embedded in the sidewalk. Murals of Puerto Rican "political prisoners" and leaders are pictured in outdoor murals; the annual Puerto Rican People's Parade and Fiesta Boricua are celebrated here, and a Son de Barrio salsa band was organized to provide Puerto Rican music for the community. In the immediate area is the alternative school, Pedro Albiso Campos, which for over 25 years has provided both an alternative high school and adult education in a Puerto Rican context (Ramos-Zayas, 1998). What is the definition of work for these people on whose island Columbus landed? Did not this "discovery" signal the conquest of the new world for the market and the resource hungry industrial old world? Lopez's response to this Eurocentric interpretation is a call to Puerto Ricans to take back their "work places", both the "island" as well as the diasporic islands within the continental U.S. After all, Puerto Ricans labored to build this country at the same time their culture was being devalued.

To summarize, we reject a narrow definition of work that relies on technology and rationality as the wellspring that defines our activities. But we do not reject rationality. We agree with Hart that education and work is for life and cannot be measured only in economic terms. We agree with Haymes and Lopez that marginalized groups must first reorient themselves in their own cultural context. Further, that urban persons should reclaim their "place", revise inaccurate histories with their structured silences denying their work contributions, and legitimize their own knowledges.

**A Closer Look from the Bottom Up: Life Affirming Work**

In this section, we will discuss three major areas of human activity that we observed in the Calumet Communities and show how this unpaid work is both necessary and appropriate: mother work, culture work, and community work. We have made a conscious effort to avoid examples that lay outside the realm of legality ; we also reject the deficit discourse that is utilized by so many professionals in discussing the poor ( McKnight, 1995).

*Mother Work*

Lowden Homes parent's challenge of mother work include safety issues as well as food , clothing and shelter. A great deal of energy is expended keeping their children safe in the midst of violence. To ensure safety for children to travel back and forth from school, they formed a parent patrol. The women formed a group of parents that would be

available during school time hours and alternated their services. Each member of the parent patrol wore bright orange vests as a symbol to let the children know they could come to them if they did not feel safe. We see this as an example of community mother work; mothers in Lowden Home look after all of Lowden Homes' children.

Another example of mother work that was apparent in our research was the activity that surrounded food. In most households the budgeted amount for food was inadequate. The parents had to seek out places within and outside the community to supplement their food budget. Supplying food for the family was a monumental task. The community grocery stores were not appropriate either in prices or quality of food. Churches established food pantries but one had to find them, note their schedules and then get there to pick up food. Many parents used the bartering system by exchanging some of their talents/skills to negotiate transportation. Bartering services in the urban setting becomes life sustaining work. Interdependent liaisons were developed to help one another over the tight spots.

Children have to be reared to understand the politics of their environment while being taught to be a good citizen. In the absence of competent legal counsel, potential interactions with police housing and welfare authorities demand significant time and energy. Young adults and children need information to develop appropriate and realistic views of the negative power that these persons hold over them-- interactions with authorities should often be avoided. This requires the development of informal policy, the elaboration of informal physical boundaries, and the sharing of consequences gleaned from past encounters. This need to protect their children from "public servants" is a social cost for the poor parent.

Supplementing income is another objective of mother work. A resident gets a job and this means someone else can earn some money by caring for her children after school. Some mothers buy snacks and pop at the wholesaler and sell it out of their homes for profit. This trading of services or goods become a way to augment the family budget. In addition, to the bartering of services, residents charge affordable fees for hair braiding, sewing and catering.

Safety, food, and citizenship work takes a lot of energy from the "normal" running of a household. In addition to the aforementioned tasks, the parents in Lowden Homes spend inordinate amounts of time at health facilities. Based on the research conducted at both Lowden Homes on the south side and the Henry Horner Homes on the west side, these communities experienced the highest rates of children with asthma, far above national norms. There are different schools of thought as to why these numbers are so high, but the bottom line is that these parents are frequent visitors at health facilities where the waiting time is often proportionately long. One area of human activity that consumes significant amounts of non-economic resources (time and energy) is the defense against chemical/environmental contamination and its subsequent non-diagnosis and misdiagnosis. Impact of these two community threats were immediately apparent amongst the very young and very old ,the most vulnerable people of poor communities. In Lowden Homes, residents are exposed to the emissions of over 320,000 automobiles daily (Trkla, 1993); auto emissions that contain Nitrous Oxide, Carbon Monoxide, Benzene, Torilene, Xylene, Dioxins and Furan which can be toxic for humans(Ohio EPA, 1999). This contamination requires families to dedicate critical resources to the full time monitoring and medicating of their health. This is work for mothers caring for their children.

*Culture Work*

Lyn Hughes, looking for real estate investment, purchased three of the row houses in North Pullman. In the next few years she turned herself into a cultural worker within the community. She educated herself in how to organize a non-profit organization so that she could develop the A. Phillip Randolph Museum in one of the houses. This meant learning how to write grants, develop a board, keep records, engage a developer, and to run the museum. There is no regular salary for this work so recruiting community volunteers to assist her in this unpaid work was necessary. From this modest beginning of honoring the man who started the first black labor union she has:

- contracted with public schools to bring children to the museum to educate them on African-American social contributions;
- obtained a million dollar grant to turn the abandoned fire house into a cultural center complex ;
- obtained national, state, and city designation for historic landmark status;
- organized and implemented a Pullman Porter travelling exhibit for the Amtrak railroad;
- consulted with Showtime on their cable TV production: "Ten Thousand African Americans called George.";
- videotaped oral histories of elderly Pullman Porters aged 78 to 96 years;
- collaborated with the cultural workers in "Bronzeville", "47th Street Blues group" and DuSable African American museum to tell the story of the Great Migration and African American's cultural work to make a "place" in

Chicago.

- conducted an annual jazz festival at the museum;
- contracted with Amerail to hire 100 community young adults trained by the community college;

The vision of the Pullman community is to economically revitalize their neighborhoods through cultural tourism. Such activity provides jobs for docents, encourages development of small shops and bring economic activity into the community. At the same time a cultural center chronicles and celebrate Black Culture, provides training for jobs in the arts, technical services and cultural production.

Another organization, the Soweto Center, concentrated on educating children and youth in cultural activities. This group established a pen pal program between their children and South African children in Soweto; created art and dance sessions that were held weekly ; implemented neighborhood beautification projects including planting flowers; behind one set of flowers a wall of respect was made with a figure for each Chicago child who had been killed by gunfire; once a month the community gathered to honor these children. Every year the Soweto Center celebrated Kwanza in the park, wherein hundreds of community members gathered to celebrate Africana culture. The Soweto group dreamed of getting a building where youth could become entrepreneurs by selling products or services they had developed. These young adults were taken to the community college to obtain skills needed to operate a small business. Moti' Watson, the cultural worker with the vision received no pay for the work she did; she and her husband put their own resources into buying a building and running the program.

The Kids of the Future from Lowden Homes participated annually in the Bud Billiken parade. This unique Chicago event celebrates blackness and African heritage. The parents worked to earn money to buy uniforms for the children; they also drilled the children to not only march but perform together. After the parade, all participants returned to Lowden Homes for a barbeque. The money to buy uniforms and to prepare the meal was obtained by volunteers who worked hard to make the children proud of their culture.

In South Chicago, the Mexican Community Center organized "block clubs" which then sponsored various cultural events. The culminating cultural event took place on Cinco de Mayo when the streets were barricaded after the parade to allow various cultural and recreational activities. Again, the work was done by volunteers and community participants.

In our cultural work we brought African and Mexican Americans together for building leadership capacity through sharing experiences. In meetings where cultural performances, such as dances or popular theater were provided, we were surprised that some participants commented that they had not seen performances from other cultures. This indicates the degree to which urban cultural groups are separated and the work needed to bring them into contact. Diversity became work to segregated neighborhoods. Cultural workers seek to break down those boundaries.

*Community Work*

While formal social service agencies are indeed taking care of the individual case, in poor communities, we learned that much work was done with little if any material reward. For instance, in Lowden Homes, by virtue of a participatory community survey administered by residents, an acute need was identified for after school learning opportunities.

These same residents organized and conducted subsequent meetings, began to keep minutes, and, eventually came to the conclusion that they had to form an organization that would be able to administer the after school program. So, in partnership with the research team, residents went about the process of learning which type of organization was needed: a 501(c)3. After months of meeting to draft by-laws, vote on them, fill out the state and federal applications, several visits to the Internal Revenue Service, and two-hundred dollars later, L.I.N.K.-Kids of the Future was formed.

It is important to note here that the research team had as one of its objectives to ensure that the decision-making power remained with the residents and that new capacities that could be maintained were left behind once the action research project ended. Therefore, the community had to implement and administer the after school program. The next step was to fund the program.

This work began with a group writing session that produced the C.A.T.E.R.(Computer Assisted Test & Examination Review) after school program. We learned that the local government had funds that were made available by the federal granting program named the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). We submitted a proposal to the local government and the program was approved for over $90,000.

Now, residents hired themselves and other community members to assist with implementing the program in the local community center. Soon, it became apparent that there was a need for the development of an independent site. To this point, they had worked with the local housing authority to reserve space in the community center. This arrangement



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deteriorated when the local advisory council, a resident group regulated by the housing authority, and its personnel began to feud with the board of directors for the newly formed organization. Residents and community board members met with the parent patrol group to determine that several vacant housing units were being commandeered to use and distribute illegal drugs. They decided to convert these same units into a full blown computer lab and alternative community center. There were then meetings with the housing authority to get approval, develop blueprints, conduct walk-throughs, and transfer the property to the L.I.N.K. organization.

There was also the issue of the next year's funding. Again, residents researched opportunities, wrote grants, and submitted them to various agencies. This time, the State of Illinois, funded both the development of a new site and the next year's operation, which totalled over $180,000.

Shortly thereafter, there was a small grant written by two residents and a university worker and submitted for a computer literacy program that would teach residents how to use a computer for its basic applications. This grant was submitted to the Laubach Literacy organization. This grant was funded and the program was administered in the homes of residents pending the development of a new site. Residents learned together how to write resumes's, put out a monthly newsletter and write poetry.

Overall, a minimal amount of grant funds were provided initially to residents on a stipend basis. However, for the most part, the residents were required to donate their time and energy. Yet, because the need for these programs and spaces was acute, these residents did the work anyway. Crime was reduced, grades raised, matriculation rates increased, and, moreover, the intensity of some needs were relieved. However, not all community work had such positive results.

In the South Chicago community area, a small storefront, turned into an educational center, was organized by members of the Catholic church. Arnold Morales worked there as a volunteer. A graphic designer by day, he encouraged the youth to get educated, and then return, buy houses and build their community. He led the community in taking absentee landlords whose buildings harbored drug activity to court. So successful was this citizen group in closing down crack houses that a "hit" was put out on Morales. He was shot dead by a young gang member as he left the community center one night. Effective community work can have costs.

**Conclusions**

Poor people, "unemployed" people work. Their goal is mostly survival in a hostile environment. Accordingly, the way citizens work often demonstrated reciprocity and creativity. Work that sustains children, other adults in the community, and their culture is a priority. Hart (2002) discusses how we privilege the work being done for commodities and devalue the work done for life affirming events. It is our view that the work that goes on in Lowden Homes, Pullman and South Chicago though it does not provide economic value, is human capital rich in life affirming activity. The mother work that is required to raise a child from birth to college in the inner city is a valuable social contribution. We found that Lowden Homes' wealth was in its people and the work they do daily in service to one another.

In a more material analysis, economic activity can be calculated. Using the frequency of our meetings in Lowden Homes Computer Learning Center project alone, and the average duration of each of these meetings, we estimate that there were over 2,000 people hours donated by economically disadvantaged residents. If these hours were compensated at $10/hour, we see that the people doing this work could have earned, conservatively, $20,000 for only the time spent in meetings. If we use the formula two hours of outside work is needed per hour of community/board work, the number of hours triples to about 6,000. In total, there was work done in Lowden Homes on one project that could be valued at approximately $60,000.

What are the values of our society? Following 9/11 we note that the polarity of our value system was exposed. For our political leaders, "shop till you drop" was the admonition; clearly the assumption was a strong society is based primarily on its material economy. However, for many if not most citizens the 9/11 tragedy created new community heroes, new social solidarity, and a desire to connect more with friends and family. For us the latter reaction is a response to do life affirming work and to place commodities and their production in a proper perspective.

The solution to our systemic dilemma is to change the system. This is political engagement (Newman, 1994). For those who identify as adult educators working within HRD, we must join that struggle. Corporations that are out of control must be critiqued; progressive corporations that are seeking ways to be socialy responsible should be encouraged (Davidmann, 1995). A strong civil society that fosters political debate is a responsibility of all citizens. We can learn from those who do life affirming work in the urban landscapes, many of whom are now marginalized from participation in the dominant society.

*Co-learners whose work has made this paper possible are Lyn Hughes, Historic North Pullman; Deborah Hardin, Willie Cole, and Marilyn Tyler, Lowden Homes; Hank Martinez, Mexican Community Committee; Antonio Lopez, Olive Harvey College; and Moti Watson, Soweto Center.*

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